

### **7.1.25 DISPOSITION OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN TAKEN INTO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY**

Dependent and found children will NOT be temporarily housed in the Public Safety Building while awaiting final disposition by a County of Los Angeles Department of Children's Service (DCS) employee. All dependent children, as described in §300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code and taken into temporary custody under authority of §305 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, shall be delivered directly to DCS in the manner prescribed in the following procedure section.

All found children that are in custody of the police may be released to their parent or legal guardian. If a parent or legal guardian cannot be found, the found child shall be released to Department of Children's Services in the manner prescribed in the following procedure section. Officers shall not direct a citizen who has found a child to take the found child back to the parent. A police unit shall be dispatched to take care of the child.

#### **Procedure**

Police officers who take into custody dependent children described in §300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and non-dependents in temporary custody pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code §305, shall, while at the scene, or as soon as practical, call the Youth Services Division, at telephone number 570-1425. During off hours, contact the Department of Children's Services 24 Hour Hotline at 800 540-4000.

The Youth Services Division shall assess the incident and advise the officer of an appropriate disposition. In cases of severe physical abuse or sexual molestation, a Child Abuse Investigator may respond to direct a coordinated investigation with Patrol personnel.

Weekdays/Business Hours 0800-1700: Dependent children shall be taken to the Department of Children Services regional office, 4060 Watson Plaza Dr., Lakewood CA, 90712, phone number 562 497-3500.

Officers shall release dependent children to the DCS supervisor on duty and submit all related police reports not later than the end of watch. All protective custodies of dependent children require an arrest report.

If a DCS Employee is not available, the officer shall call MacLaren Children's Center Command Post, telephone number (818) 575-4196, for instructions. Children shall remain in police custody until their release to a DCS employee.